

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 AEC-11 AID-20 CEA-02 CIAE-00

CIEP-02 COME-00 EB-11 FEAE-00 FPC-01 H-03 INR-10

INT-08 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 OMB-01 PM-07 RSC-01 SAM-01

SCI-06 SP-03 SS-20 STR-08 TRSE-00 ACDA-19 PA-04

PRS-01 USIA-15 SAJ-01 DLOS-07 COA-02 NEA-14 DRC-01

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R 171424Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4628

INFO AMCONSUL ADANA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL IZMIR

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

USMISSION NATO

SECDEF WASHDC

AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

USMISSION USUN NY

CINCUSAFE

USDOCOSOUTH

USCINCEUR

USNMR SHAPE

CINCUSAREUR

DIA/DIA-5 WASHDC

COMSIXTHFLT

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 4739

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, GR, TU

SUBJECT: GREEK-TURKISH AEGEAN DISPUTE

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SUMMARY: GOT PREPARES SHARP RESPONSE TO GOG PROTEST OVER TURKISH SEISMIC EXPLORATION IN AEGEAN, EXPLAINS TURKISH STRATEGIC VIEW ON PROBLEM, OUTLINES ITS APPROACHES TO SOLUTION, AND INDICATES LITTLE DESIRE FOR USG OR NATO INVOLVEMENT AT MOMENT. END SUMMARY.

1. IN MEETING WITH DCM MORNING JUNE 17, MFA DIRGEN POLAFFS SOYSAL HANDED OVER COPY OF JUNE 14 GOG PROTEST NOTE ON SEISMIC EXPLORATIONS IN AEGEAN BY TURKISH NAVAL RESEARCH VESSEL "CANDARLI" (TEXT SEPTEL).

2. SOYSAL LAMENTED CONTINUAL GOG "CHANGES OF APPROACH" THIS MATTER. SAID FIRST GREEKS SAID "CANDARLI" SHOULDN'T COME; THEN IMPLIED SEISMIC EXPLORATIONS UNOBJECTIONABLE; THEN SAID "CANDARLI" HAD IN FACT NOT GONE INTO DISPUTED WATERS AT ALL; NOW THEY ARE LODGING "VIGOROUS PROTEST."

3. TURKS FIND NOTE DISCOURAGING. THEY CANNOT ACCEPT GOG CLAIM OF "EXCLUSIVE SOVEREIGN RIGHTS" OVER CONTINENTAL SHELF; THEY BELIEVE TURKEY HAS THAT RIGHT IN THIS AREA BUT ARE WILLING NEGOTIATE IT. PERHAPS, GREEK NOTE IS AIMED PRIMARILY AT "SCARING OFF" ANY FOREIGN COMPANIES CONTEMPLATING CARRYING ON EXPLORATION WORK FOR TURKEY - "AS YOU HAVE ALREADY DONE WITH GSI."

4. AT ANY RATE, GOT WILL SHORTLY REPLY TO GREEK NOTE, STATING THAT IT RESPECTS RIGHTS ALL OTHER COUNTRIES - ESPECIALLY THOSE OF FRIEND AND ALLY LIKE GREECE - BUT EXPECTS SAME RESPECT FROM OTHER SIDE. IT WISHES DISCUSS BUT AS LONG AS THERE IS NO AGREED DELIMITATION OF AEGEAN, GOT WILL CONTINUE NOT ONLY EXPLORATION BUT EXPLOITATION AS WELL. IT REGRETS "VIGOROUS PROTEST" BUT REJECTS IT EQUALLY VIGOROUSLY. AT TIME NOTE IS DELIVERED, GOT WILL ORALLY INFORM GOG IT HAS NO INTENTION OF AGGRESSION AGAINST GREECE AND CONTINUES TO SEEK PEACEFUL MEANS FOR SETTLEMENT.

5. IN LONG DISCUSSION OF AEGEAN PROBLEMS WHICH FOLLOWED, SOYSAL REPEATED ARGUMENTS REPORTED ANKARA 4596, AND SAID IF GOG EXTENDS TO 12-MILE LIMIT, GOT HAS ALREADY DRAFTED A LAW "WHICH PARLIAMENT WOULD PASS IN THREE DAYS" PROCLAIMING CONFIDENTIAL

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TURKISH RIGHTS IN AEGEAN AND DIRECTING THAT THEY BE EXERCISED. HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT HE WAS SOMEWHAT RELIEVED TO HEAR THAT IN RESPONSE TO HIS EXPRESSION OF CONCERN TO GERMAN EMBASSY HERE (STATE 127871), GERMAN AMBASSADOR IN ATHENS HAD SEEN BOTH TETENES AND VLACOS WHO ASSURED HIM THAT GOG DID NOT INTEND ANNOUNCE 12-MILE LIMITE BEFORE CARACAS AND WOJLD DO SO ONLY AFTER FURTHER CONSULTATION WITH GOT.

6. IF CONSULTATION COMES ON DELIMITATION OF THE CONTINENTAL SHELF, SOYSAL SAID, GOT HAS THREE POSSIBLE APPROACHES IN MIND: (A) A LINE DOWN THE CENTRAL AEGEAN GIVING MORE AREA TO GREECE THAN TO TURKEY AS COMPENSATION FOR THE FACT THAT THERE WOULD BE GREEK ISLANDS ON THE TURKISH SIDE; (B) WORKING OUT SPECIFIED SHELF AREAS (PERHAPS ONLY ON THE OPEN SEA SIDE) FOR EACH GREEK ISLAND WHICH WOULD LEAVE GOT RESIDUE OF CONTINENTAL SHELF; AND (C) A BROAD AGREEMENT FOR SHARED OR JOINT RIGHTS TO THE WHOLE SHELF TO BE EXPLOITED IN A COOPERATIVE WAY. THE LAST, HE SAID, WAS GREEK DIRGEN POLAFFS TZOUNIS' IDEA. IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT WORK OUT BUT MIGHT BE WORTH TRY IF (A) OR (B) WOULDN'T WORK.

7. SOYSAL SAID TURKISH MILITARY VIEW OF PROBLEM WITH GREECE WAS BEING INCREASINGLY HEARD IN GOVERNMENT CIRCLES. IT WAS VERY SIMPLE AND VERY STRATEGIC. GREEK DOMINATION OF THE AEGEAN WAS CONTRARY TO TURK NATIONAL HONOR BUT WOULD NOT BE CATASTROPHIC AS LONG AS DOMINATING POWER WAS GREECE WHICH TURKEY COULD ALWAYS HANDLE. MEANWHILE, TURKEY COULD HAVE ACCESS TO SEA FROM ITS MEDITERRANEAN COAST. HOWEVER, SHOULD GREEKS COME TO DOMINATE CYPRUS AS WELL, TURKEY WOULD BE CUT OFF ENTIRELY. AGAIN THE FEAR WAS NOT OF WHAT GREEKS MIGHT BE ABLE TO DO WITH THIS STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE BUT OF WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF GREECE WERE TO BE TAKEN OVER OR OCCUPIED BY COMMUNISTS AS IT HAD BEEN BY GERMANS IN WWII. THIS TURKEY COULD NOT POSSIBLY COPE WITH.

8. IN FACT DCM'S REPETITION EARLIER URGINGS OF CAUTION TO BOTH NATO ALLIES, SOYSAL SAID HE TOO CONCERNED ABOUT DANGERS ESCALATION, ESPECIALLY AS RESULT OF GOG ANNOUNCEMENT OF 12-MILE LIMIT AND TURKISH REACTION THERETO. GOT SATISFIED WITH USG POSITION, HOWEVER, AND HE THOUGHT FOR MOMENT BEST THING WAS TO LET GREEKS AND TURKS WORK OUT PROBLEM BILATERALLY. CONFIDENTIAL

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HE KNEW USG AND NATO DID NOT WANT TAKE SIDES OR GET INVOLVED IN TECHNICAL AND LEGAL MATTERS UNDER DISPUTE. HE HAD ONLY ONE THOUGHT. D'AVIGNON OF BELGIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY, WHEN INFORMED BY TURKS OF DISPUTE, HAD LOOKED AT MAP AND SAID HE KNEW NOTHING OF LEGAL PROBLEMS INVOLVED BUT THAT IT WAS OBVIOUSLY SIMPLY NOT "EQUITABLE" FOR GREEKS TO HAVE EVERYTHING IN AEGEAN EXCEPT TURKISH TERRITORIAL WATERS. PERHAPS, SAID SOYSAL, IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF SOME OF THE ALLIES SAID JUST THAT TO GOG. MACOMBER

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